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ABSTRACT

Guidance for career development must be concerned not so much with helping young people learn how to earn a living as with learning how to live a life. In the early part of this century, certain conditions and attitudes prevailed which influenced the character of the career guidance profession. However, these conditions and attitudes are no longer applicable to the present and emerging periods. The profession is changing in response to the changed social context in which we function. As in the field of medicine, the trend in guidance is toward a greater emphasis on understanding the total developmental process of young people. The study and manipulation of environments are increasingly viewed as crucial vehicles for the achievement of guidance objectives. This concern with environmental encounters in both medicine and guidance, and a reconsideration of the nature-nurture controversy, should lead to greater attention being given to the interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic factors involved in the development of human behavior. The early individual psychological model now being challenged by the developmental-ecological model as a more appropriate frame for the conceptualization and implementation of guidance functions has implications for the present and for the future. (Author/EB)

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VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE: FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

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In considering a future focus for vocational guidance, I have been influenced by a bias that I developed several years ago in my first course in vocational guidance with Albert Thompson. In that course I came to recognize that when we speak of vocational guidance we are talking about the guidance of persons in their total development. Nothing that I have learned since those early days has changed that conviction. Since the individual brings to any setting a total self, any concept of guidance limited to an isolated aspect of that self is insufficient. Whether we are talking about educational guidance, vocational guidance, or social guidance, we are talking about the processes by which individuals are assisted in the making and the facilitation of decisions concerning development as total human beings. In the period immediately ahead of us this view of guidance is more appropriate than ever, since guidance in the latter part of this century and the next will involve not separate emphases on one's educational or social development but comprehensive concern with career development, in which "career" is defined as the course by which one makes a productive and satisfying place for himself in the society. In this course of development the individual is going to be concerned with choice of friends, choice of mate, the

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management of family and other personal relations, the pursuit of aesthetic expression, political participation, cultural identification, and considerably less concerned with the narrower, specific tasks of vocational choice and vocational development as precursors to earning a living. Guidance for career development of necessity then must be concerned not so much with helping young people learn how to earn a living as with learning how to live a life.

From this perspective let us examine the development of the professional functions called guidance in the context of the broader social forces which have influenced it.

Social institutions and societal functions tend to reflect the character and needs of the society in which they develop. Thus, new economic, educational, cultural, even religious organizational forms gain little acceptance unless they bear functional relationships to the dominant concerns of the social order in which they emerge.

Unfortunately, these same institutions and the organizational forms by which they are expressed do have a proclivity for survival long after their bases in the realities of social appropriateness or social necessity have disappeared. As hard as it is to bring about the new, it seems even harder to disengage from the old.

In the early part of this century, when guidance as a formal institutionalized process was emerging, certain conditions prevailed which significantly influenced the character of our emerging profession. An examination of a few of these should give us a helpful picture.

1. The political economy of our nation was open or fluid; it was more generally true then that the United States was indeed a land of opportunity, guaranteeing rewards for hard work. New communities were frequently being established, and political power was decentralized. Participation was more widely distributed. In this setting, failure to advance oneself was thought to be related to lack of information, lack of initiative, or lack of basic capacity.

2. Although fluctuations in the economy and job market greatly influenced the quantity of opportunities available, the range of opportunities was fairly limited. Limitations of job variety were also imposed by the fact of greater geographic stability, in a period where many people lived their whole lives in the same area in which they were born. These regional limitations were reinforced by the fact that the job market in any individual area, or as a whole, was considerably less complex. Entry into the labor market was quick and simple for most; the vast number of jobs required only a small amount of training. At the same time, vocational choice tended to be permanent, not only for the individual making the choice, but even intergenerationally, as sons continued to follow in their fathers' footsteps in choice of occupation. This

custom, of course, greatly reduced the problems of guidance.

3. The simplicity of the training required for most occupations meant that job entry for many did not even require the basic academic skills, although this level of education at least was essential for the upwardly mobile. However, in most instances, the complexity of a given job or the job market as a whole was never so great as to preclude almost unlimited advancement in most occupations with relatively low level academic preparation. Exceptions would include the professions and those highly skilled crafts which necessarily entailed considerable education or long apprenticeships. On the whole, education at the basic skills level was thought to be desirable, even essential for some work, but advanced and higher education were luxuries; a liberal arts education was thought to be no preparation for anything worthwhile or practical.

4. During this period, the education system functioned cooperatively with the economic system as the school came to play primarily a sorting role, identifying and encouraging those who were thought to benefit from schooling, and urging the vast number of other prospective workers out into a society which was readily able to absorb into the labor force those whose predicted educability was low. The testing movement

began to gain prominence during this period; intelligence and achievement tests were used to identify those youngsters with potential and for whom additional educational opportunities should be provided. School curriculum was relatively nonvaried, and those who could master its learning tasks progressed; those who could not, dropped out. There were almost no provisions for individual differences or exceptional children. The school was able to practice this sort of meritocracy in education without being questioned as long as the society was able to absorb the victims of this sorting process and as long as the victims were powerless to demand more of the system.

5. The tendency at this time in medicine, in psychology, in sociology, and to some extent in social work was to regard illness, maladjustment, underdevelopment, and low productivity as intrinsically pathological and the responsibility of individuals. If you failed, there was something wrong with you.

6. The colloquial view of such human characteristics as interests, aptitudes, and abilities was that these aspects of human behavior were predetermined and fixed, and that they could be identified and assessed. On the assumption that such objective analyses could be made, it was thought that persons should be placed according to these factors. Thus it became the task

of testing to identify potentials along these dimensions and the task of guidance to place people in accordance with them. In psychometrics, attention came to be focussed on the development of interest tests, tests of aptitude, and tests of achievement as if these attributes were intrinsic rather than developed characteristics. In education and in industry, the precursors of elaborate placement and tracking procedures emerged.

The list could be longer, but these examples will suffice to suggest how conditions and attitudes greatly influenced what emerged as guidance, and how even now they continue to influence what we do in guidance; but the fact is that none of these conditions is true of the present and emerging periods. And not one of these attitudes is appropriate to the new conditions:

1. The political economy is not as fluid and susceptible to individual effort as was true of this earlier period, nor is it as much the case as our customary and often unthinking defense of free enterprise would indicate.
2. Few of us, and none of our children, are likely to spend a lifetime in the same vocations or jobs and those of us who do will not be able to continue in these vocations performing the same tasks.
3. Sustained employment and advancement require more than quick and simple training, but rather generic competence and continuing trainability as the common requirements.

4. The school increasingly is called upon to perform a universal developmental role, in which the development of all pupils by whatever necessary course of action is the task. Sorting is the least of its functions and its operation does not involve selecting and predicting, but identifying and prescribing, in which identification serves to describe qualitatively the patterns of intellectual and social function and prescription serves to specify the nature of the learning experience essential to the further development of patterns identified.

5. Increasingly, we see illness, maladjustment, underdevelopment, and low productivity as society's failure to provide those learning experiences, special environmental supports and access to opportunities necessary to the adequate functioning of specific individuals.

6. We see interests, aptitudes, and abilities as being greatly influenced by the life experiences of developing persons, by the models to which they are exposed, and the opportunities that they have for participation in the varied affairs of the society.

I think we must conclude that the trend in guidance continues to reflect the old conditions; we are not operating to meet the challenges implicit in these changed conditions. Although there has been and continues to be some movement in the field, in my

view it has not been rapid enough, nor are our perceptions of the changing conditions and direction acute enough. Nonetheless, our profession is changing in response to the changed social context in which we function. Whether we want it to or recognize its movement, this profession, like others, must continue to move toward congruence with the need of the society.

I think I can best make my point by quickly reviewing the life history of two professions, medicine and guidance.

-- One of the earliest conceived goals of medicine was the control and elimination of evil spirits, with the witch doctor standing as the symbol or practitioner of the "science;" in a sense, guidance in its early days was also concerned with evil spirits as causative agents, with moralistic exhortation serving a function parallel to the witch doctor's incantations. It was not by accident that the religious leader was the first chief dispenser of guidance and continues to function actively in this field.

-- A somewhat higher level of scientific procedure was reached in medicine with the introduction of herb therapy, which involved the identification and administering of substances in nature which seemed to be associated with recovery in the infirmed; in the guidance field, information came to serve a similar purpose, with the emphasis on supplying the specific information thought necessary to adjustment and decision making. In guidance, the parallel to medicine's treatment with herbs was our treatment with information.

-- As scientific knowledge increased, surgery became the primary technique in medicine, its purpose being to correct disordered

physical conditions causing illness or interfering with normal functions. Surgery so dominated the profession that its importance came to be reflected in the title, "physician and surgeon." Similarly, counseling came to be the technique of central importance in guidance, the procedure being directed at emotional disorders causing maladjustment or interfering with functioning. Counseling so dominated this profession that "counseling and guidance" came to be the common title by which the profession is known.

-- With the development of the germ theory of illness, germ control became a central concern of medicine, and growing success in the control and treatment of germs accounted for major strides in the profession; anxiety control became a similar concern in the field of guidance when anxiety came to be considered a central feature in maladjustment, emotional disturbance, and mental illness. The treatment and control of anxiety greatly influenced the practice of guidance despite many admonitions that this technique constituted psychotherapy and was beyond the scope of guidance. Nonetheless there hardly exists a counselor who does not directly or indirectly turn his attention to the control, treatment, or utilization of anxiety in his work as a guidance specialist.

-- The next development in medicine, supportive therapy, was made possible as a result of germ theory. By enriched nutrition, by control of environmental conditions so as to reduce the competing demands on the system, or by the introduction of drugs which directly attacked germs or provided support for the system, supportive therapy was aimed at strengthening the organism as it naturally combatted germs. The field of guidance was influenced by similar methods,

also known as supportive therapy and also utilizing drugs for the treatment of certain conditions. Just as germ theory influenced the course of medicine, so anxiety theory led practitioners in the guidance field to develop supportive procedures designed to provide psychological support as the individual struggles with his anxieties, or to structure the environment so as to reduce the competing demands on the individual, or even, as in chemotherapy, by the introduction of sedative drugs, to attempt to insulate the individual from the disruptive effects of anxiety. We have not yet discovered in this area a chemical treatment for the anxiety itself.

-- Germ theory was also responsible for a further development in the field of medicine, public health. When correction of disease through the application of germ theory proved to be inadequate, it became clear that preventive measures were needed. Medical specialists began to turn their attention to the treatment of conditions which produce disease; when malaria became a health hindrance to the exploitation of underdeveloped peoples by the so-called civilized countries, attention was turned to the control of the mosquito and the swamps in which they breed. When the source of tuberculosis was understood, steps could be taken to correct the conditions out of which it developed. The effort to change public health conditions was a major breakthrough in the field of medicine. Guidance was influenced by a similar concern for mental hygiene and community mental health. As the causes of emotional disturbance and mental illness were increasingly recognized to derive from the life experiences of the victims, the mental hygiene movement became prominent

in the schools. Increasingly, mental hygiene specialists and the communities they served turned their attention to eliminating conditions which might create problems or interfere with wholesome development. Racial and economic discrimination became matters of public concern; the concept of the democratic, as opposed to authoritarian, classroom was given some attention. The theories of Dewey gained prominence, and educators came to recognize the importance of the student's learning to appreciate himself and his relationships with other people. The conditions under which people lived began to draw almost as much concern as mental illness itself, and all aspects of school service were seen as part of these conditions, influencing the children equally with their classroom experiences. It should be emphasized, however, that at this stage the ideas and theories were considerably more honored than their practice.

-- This concern for the prevention of disease and disorder through control of physical and social health conditions came to be reflected in an equal concern for developmental processes. In medicine in the current period, for example, pediatric specialists are trying to change their image as a group of doctors concerned only with diseases of children to that of a medical specialty concerned with the child's total course of development and the contribution this makes to health or illness. Pediatricians on the growing edge of the field are increasingly viewing themselves as specialists in environmental and developmental medicine. As such they are concerned on the one hand with the monitoring and management of developmental processes and related environmental conditions to the

end that optimal health conditions prevail, and on the other hand with the manipulation of these processes and conditions to the end that disease and malfunction are corrected. We see a similar trend in guidance, where the natural and directed development of young people is increasingly seen as the field's principal concern and where the study and manipulation of environments are increasingly viewed as crucial vehicles for the achievement of guidance objectives. Concern with theories of career development and concern with the theories underlying social development reflect the growing emphasis in the field on understanding the developmental process as a first step toward the goal of directing that process. In my own work, drawing on philosophical materialist concepts, I have argued for years for greater attention to the influence of environmental factors on development and the need for guidance specialists to concern themselves with the analysis, design, and control of environmental encounters. When this concern is combined with an understanding of the developmental process and the two are used to complement each other rather than being left to chance, we will find that we have provided the basis for more successful guidance work, and that means the opportunity for making a real difference in the lives of young people.

-- This concern with environmental encounters in both medicine and guidance, and a reconsideration of the nature-nurture controversy should lead to greater attention being given to the interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic factors involved in the development of human behavior. This concern with the interactive nature of these many factors is likely to lead to a confluence of interests

and division of labor between medicine and guidance, with both being concerned with human developmental ecology, and with medicine focusing on physical and bio-physiological functions and guidance focusing on psychological and socio-political functions, where the quality of function is seen as largely determined by the nature of the individual and his reciprocal relationships with the vectors operative in his existential field (his perception of the people, objects, conditions, structures, etc. of his environment).

For both of these professions the history of knowledge and of human development makes it clear that the dynamics of the ecosystem (the living community and its non-living surroundings, both in their objective reality and as they are subjectively perceived) should be and will be their ultimate joint concern.

In order to understand the relevance of the ecological model, it is helpful to review the role the system plays in providing the physical, psycho-social, and socio-cultural phenomena necessary for man's successful adjustment to his environment. Within any system both supportive and restrictive forces are present, facilitating or interfering with reception of the basic life supplies and thereby placing the population at varying degrees of risk. Generally there is consensus that it is the function of physical, mental, or social health workers to assess these forces and examine their interaction to the end of intervening with preventive measures to preclude serious disturbances in or restore the homeostatic balance between man and his environment. This is not an easy task. In its essence it is similar to the task of applied biology that ecologists

have been attempting since the days of Haeckel.

Basically the ecological model provides a synthesizing function when superimposed on a social system. By providing a conceptual frame encompassing the human and non-human environment, the model offers a framework for gathering data of a multidisciplinary nature without disturbing the natural interplay of environmental forces. Rather than the operant approach of behavioral psychology which attempts to control certain forces and concentrate on events and processes in reference to contrived data, ecology employs a transducer data system in which conditions "in situ" are assessed. This kind of dynamic analysis is needed by the guidance specialist who is trying to examine all the environmental forces impinging upon the student's behavior and also the status of his adaptation to the environments in question, the school, home, community, etc. While the student is being understood, the model simultaneously permits the worker to examine the environment, looking for ideas for changing the total structure, redefining the goals and exploring the ability of the system to survive in its present state, the ability of the student to survive in that state as well as the potential of both for existence in improved states.

In addition to integrating the physical, psycho-social, and socio-cultural milieu, the ecological model is based on evolutionary principles stressing the process of development. By allowing the analysis of both structure and function, the model is congruent with the developmental nature of the learner. An essential weakness in education has been its focus on the assessment of the status of the learner in terms of achievement level, personality type, and

measured intelligence, procedures which arbitrarily freeze and extract isolated evidences of development or "learning," negating the dynamic character of the teaching-learning and developmental processes. The result is that we view the data as they are received--in static categories, while what is more helpful to the improvement of the educational process is the way in which the person is functioning in the maintenance of equilibrium.

Guidance, in concordance with other professions concerned with the actualization of human potential, is moving to an even greater emphasis on primary prevention while continuing to support both secondary and tertiary methods of interaction. Primary prevention seeks not simply to lessen the impact of harmful forces or even to immunize the population from their effects, as do tertiary and secondary methods, but also to eliminate them from the environment.

At first the focus of the ecological model on the individual primarily as a representative of a community or other organizational structure may seem incongruent with the professed concern of guidance with the development of the individual. But such concern does not limit the worker to interacting only with individuals as representatives of groups. The ecological model permits us to be truly respectful of the individual by giving greater attention to the multiple forces impinging on the individual and to help the individual grow through the adequate definition and control of the effective environment which is unique to him. Evidence mounts to suggest that a substantial impact in reducing risk can be made on individual

development by altering the system in which the individual functions.

While interaction itself is complex, human interaction with other humans and the non-living environment occurs at a wide variety of levels, both conscious and unconscious, verbal and nonverbal, explicit and implicit. Recent developments in interaction analysis, particularly in communication, show promise when applied to social settings, but we are just beginning to recognize the utility of these methods within the school setting. The developmental-ecological model makes understanding the system and its multiple interactions equally important to understanding the individual, and it makes control and modification of the system crucial to the development of the individual, and uniquely appropriate as a model for the reconceptualization of guidance.

First, it is important to ask what is the purpose of the professional guidance function? We can summarize our answer into three points:

1. to make available to human subjects expanded alternatives for choice referrable to career development;
2. to optimize decision behavior in these expanded situations of choice;
3. to facilitate development and movement toward the objectives specified by these choices.

Each of these has a dual focus, one on the individual, the other on the field in which the individual exists.

Having been greatly influenced by the early medical model, guidance has focused almost exclusively on the individual--what does

he bring to the situation? What predictions can be made relative to the individual's function? What can we do to change the individual?

The early individual psychological model is now being challenged by the developmental-ecological model as a more appropriate frame for the conceptualization and implementation of guidance functions. Put simply, the choices an individual makes and the quality with which these choices and his total development are implemented are largely dependent upon the nature of the interaction between whatever is given or possible in the individual and that which is given or possible in the system in which the individual functions.

With this framework, it is possible to examine some of the implications for guidance, right now and in the future:

1. The logical first step is a shift from appraisal of individuals to appraisal of environments or individuals in environments, with attention to such questions as, what is the nature of the conditions of learning and development, or, what is the reciprocal relationship between this individual and his developmental-learning environment? The new focus calls for a shift from the study of pupils or clients to the study of systems--the school as a social system, the plant or office as a social system, education as a social process.
2. Also required is a shift from the assessment of behavioral product to the assessment of behavioral process. With less emphasis on quantitative summary and classification, the guidance specialist will examine the nature of intel-

lectual and social functioning for the individual and describe those functions qualitatively.

3. This shift in appraisal focus will result in a movement away from prediction to prescription; the more sophisticated and sensitive appraisal process will provide information making possible the prescription or design of learning experiences and learning environments. This should be followed by a shift from identification of and placement in available opportunities to the creation of, and placement in, appropriate opportunity situations.

4. The guidance function should be vastly broadened from our traditional concern for the discovery of the talented few to the development of talent in all. This entails a fundamental commitment to those policies and practices which ensure universal optimal development.

5. We will also need a shift in method from didactic exhortation to discovery and modeling as vehicles for learning, with more attention given to use of naturally occurring or contrived environments to provide interactions supportive of learning and development in specified directions.

6. The ecological model implies a shift from interpretation to environmental orientation as the principle focus in counseling and other forms of directed learning. The skills the guidance specialist helps to develop in young people should come to include the use of environmental

clues and relationships to analyze and interpret his experiences, to manage information, and to bring order to confusion and chaos as essential steps in problem-solving.

7. Emphasis on consultation should come to be greater than emphasis on counseling, and the focus in consultation should include communication with persons and groups who have the power to make necessary and relevant changes in the conditions which determine the course of the student's life.

8. In addition to these changes in focus and method, a significant consideration is <u>style</u>: what is needed is a shift from diplomacy to advocacy. Young people don't need so much to be apologized for these days, but need rather better understanding. Their rights need to be more appropriately defended and opportunities for meaningful involvement need to be more vigorously advanced.

9. Finally, we will need to bring about a shift from a primary concern with <u>socialization</u> to a major concern with politicalization. Probably one of the most important contributions we can make to the optimal development of young people is to help them to learn not only what is expected of them by the social order--the traditional concern of socialization--but how they can effectively use themselves in relation to other people to cope with the systems which in large measure control their lives.

> Increasingly, I see social coping and systems management or systems maneuvering skills as the essential skills of the future, and this means that participation by the guidance specialist in the politicalization process is raised to the level of urgency.

In the present climate, we as institutional representatives and professionals appear to be contributing more to the separation of this process from the main line of education and student development. Our young people are moving vigorously on this front without us. And too many of us have lined up behind the protectors of the status quo. While conservation is an essential process and can be a respectable stance, in the present period too many of our young people see this concern with maintaining what is as a camouflage for advancing executive, legislative, judicial, and police repression. Under these conditions, when they proceed without more mature guidance, their need for politicalization is sometimes expressed as irrational protest. But as a professional guidance specialist concerned with their development and equally concerned with change, I cannot turn my back to their strivings or join the opposition. I must join with them and hope to influence them and that they will influence me. With them I raise the clenched fist--symbol of protest--symbol of determination--symbol of hope that power will come to the people and that they can let the sun shine in!